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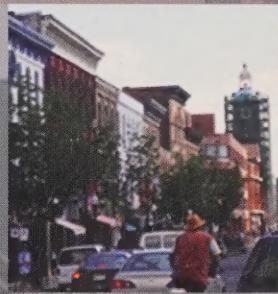


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# Identify

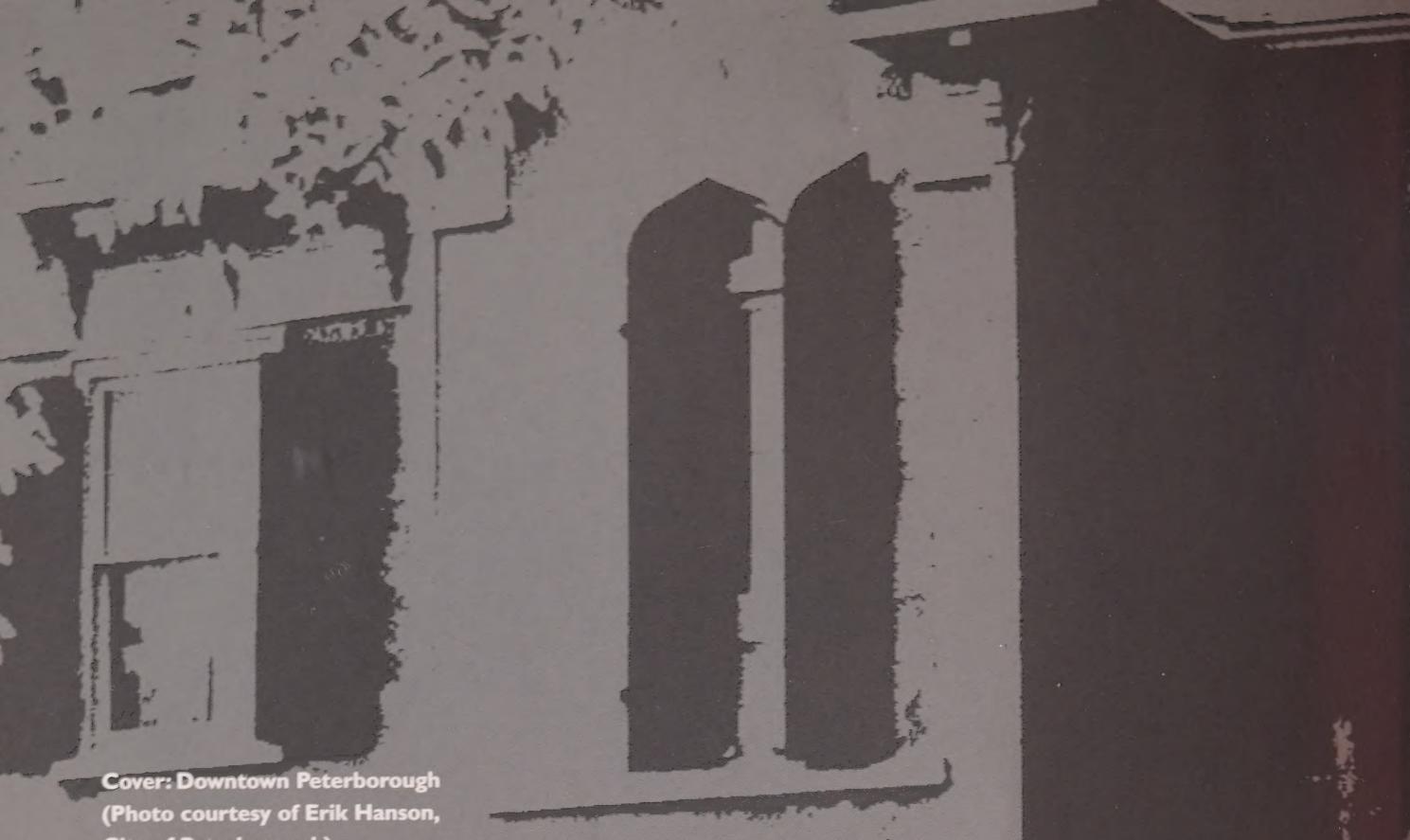
Strengthening Ontario's Heritage:



# Protect

# Promote

An introductory  
guide to identifying,  
protecting and  
promoting the  
heritage of our  
communities.



**Cover: Downtown Peterborough**  
(Photo courtesy of Erik Hanson,  
City of Peterborough)



# A Message from the Honourable

## Madeleine Meilleur, Minister of Culture

On behalf of the Government of Ontario, I am pleased to introduce Strengthening Ontario's Heritage, a guide to identifying, protecting and promoting our communities' heritage.

We are at the start of a new era for heritage conservation in Ontario. After more than 30 long years, we can now say with conviction and pride that heritage truly matters in Ontario. At last, Ontario has what it takes to be a leader in protecting and promoting the irreplaceable heritage of this province and its people.

In April 2005, our government celebrated the passing of new legislation strengthening the Ontario Heritage Act. Our heritage protection laws have been updated for the 21<sup>st</sup> century and are now in line with leading jurisdictions in Canada and abroad. Those of us who are dedicated to preserving heritage know full well what an immense difference this will make in our efforts to safeguard our precious heritage resources.

We now have effective demolition controls, allowing municipalities to stop the destruction of designated properties.

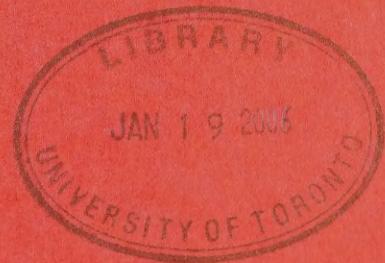
Now that the new stronger Heritage Act is in place, I am confident that the list of heritage sites across Ontario will continue to grow. We must educate our local leaders and the public to recognize and respect the importance of our heritage. We must show property owners and the business community that preserving our heritage makes good economic sense.

At the Ministry of Culture, we hope that you will continue with this important work. Strengthening Ontario's Heritage is designed for anyone who is interested in community heritage preservation.

I look forward to working with municipalities and other heritage partners as we develop regulations, guidelines and additional tools like this one to help build stronger communities and a better quality of life for all Ontarians.

Sincerely,

Madeleine Meilleur  
Minister



# The year 2005 put Ontario at the forefront of heritage conservation.

The first comprehensive changes to our heritage laws in a generation, the 2005 amendments to the Ontario Heritage Act promise to usher in a new era for heritage conservation in the province. The centrepiece of these changes is the power to be able to stop, not just delay, the demolition of designated heritage buildings. For a copy of the new act, visit the Ministry of Culture website at [www.culture.gov.on.ca](http://www.culture.gov.on.ca).

Also this year, changes to the Planning Act and the Provincial Policy Statement have resulted in stronger language and tools to protect cultural heritage. In addition, the federal and provincial governments are implementing the Historic Places Initiative, a partnership providing new tools to conserve our historic places.

We now have a formal framework at all levels of government for the conservation of heritage resources.



Toronto's Historic Distillery District is buzzing with outdoor performers and artisans.  
(Photo: Ontario Tourism Marketing Partnership)

Heritage is no longer just about individual buildings; it is about heritage streetscapes, districts and landscapes that provide the sense of place for our communities.

Beyond this, there is all the other work that municipalities, municipal heritage committees and other heritage organizations do, such as celebrations for Heritage Week, plaques and educational programs, walking tours, publications, inventories and planning policies. It is thanks to the thousands of volunteer hours put in by advocates and property owners alike that so much of this important work is being done.

The challenge at hand is to build on our successes and to take full advantage of new legislation, policies and programs in our communities.

The purpose of this guide is to assist with this great task.



A provincial plaque is unveiled in Ottawa to commemorate journalist Marie-Rose Turcot.  
(Photo: Ontario Heritage Trust)

# What's in this Guide?

This guide is designed for anyone who is interested in ensuring that the heritage of their community is well conserved.

It discusses cultural heritage resources – what they are and how to manage them wisely. It focuses on three key steps in heritage conservation: identification, protection and promotion or celebration.

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This section explores why cultural heritage resources are so important for communities – from fostering identity and pride, to enhancing quality of life, to promoting economic development.

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Here, you will get an idea of the range of cultural heritage resources that you are likely to find in your community and ways of identifying them.

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How can you get involved? This last section leaves you with some questions and suggestions for how to become involved in heritage conservation in your community.



The Old Order Mennonite and Amish residents of the Waterloo region have played and continue to play an important role in shaping the landscape and identity of that part of Ontario.

(Photo: Ontario Tourism Marketing Partnership)

# Heritage as a Community Resource

## What is cultural heritage?

Our cultural heritage is a big part of what makes a community unique.

What would Kingston be without its limestone buildings; or Windsor without Walkerville; or Cobalt without its mine headframes; or Petroglyphs Provincial Park without its petroglyphs?

Ontario's identity and character are rooted in our rich and diverse heritage. Heritage enhances our quality of life and sense of place. It reflects the distinct expressions and aspirations of our many communities and cultures.

Our cultural heritage is not just about the past – it is about the places, spaces and stories that we value today that we want to build on for the future.

Cultural heritage resources can take many different forms – museum, archive

and library collections; buildings and monuments; streetscapes and landscapes, bridges and railway stations; cemeteries; archaeological sites; artifacts, documents and photographs; stories and folktales; traditional arts, crafts and skills.

People recognize heritage as a valuable cultural and social resource, and are also aware of the direct economic benefits and spin-offs of heritage conservation – bringing tourist dollars into the community; revitalizing main streets and downtowns; creating jobs; enhancing the desirability of neighbourhoods; and increasing property values and the municipal tax base. Heritage conservation is, in fact, a form of community economic development.

More than that, our heritage enriches us, inspires us, enlightens us and guides us in our growth and development. The efforts we make today to conserve community heritage will ensure a lasting legacy for future generations.

*Our heritage tells us who we are, where we have come from, and what we have accomplished. It is a source of strength and confidence that puts the changes of society into perspective and helps us to build a better future. ([www.culture.gov.on.ca](http://www.culture.gov.on.ca))*

## How does heritage benefit your community?

People used to think of heritage conservation as an end in itself, but now we see that it is just the beginning.

## Cultural heritage is a source of knowledge and memory.

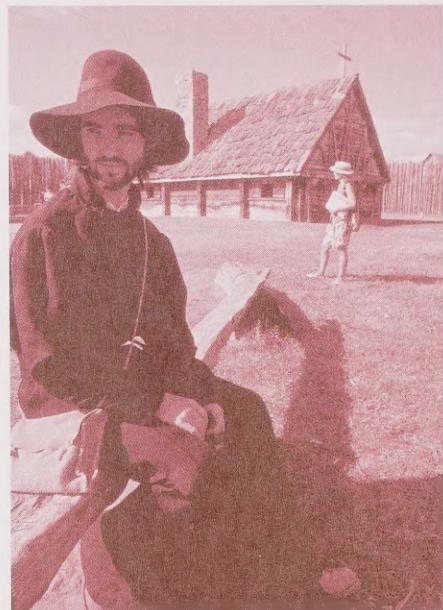
Heritage resources have intrinsic value in the information they contain about the past. They can teach us a great deal. Museums and archives are storehouses of knowledge and community memory, and provide all kinds of opportunities for formal and informal learning. Buildings, landscapes and archaeological sites can give us a unique insight into Ontario's past – knowledge that sometimes cannot be obtained any other way.

Our cultural heritage helps us make sense of our rapidly changing world and guides us into the future.

## Cultural heritage contributes to the quality of life of a community.

Well-maintained historic buildings, streetscapes and landscapes contribute to safe and comfortable neighbourhoods and foster local identity and pride.

Cultural heritage makes communities more distinctive by helping to tell the stories of these places. Who lived here? What happened here? Local museums and heritage sites provide a focus for life-long learning and community events.



Sainte Marie Among the Hurons  
(Photo: Ontario Tourism Marketing Partnership)

*"We realize we have to make heritage a municipal priority and give it the financial support it deserves. Otherwise, we can't say we have quality of life in London. Quality of life isn't just roads and sewers... it's a respect for where we come from and it's about focusing on the future."*

*- Cheryl Miller, Councillor, City of London*

## Heritage conservation stimulates downtown revitalization.

Communities across Canada, the United States and abroad have been capitalizing on their distinctive heritage assets by revitalizing their historic business cores and reclaiming them as the commercial and social hubs of the community.

Rehabilitating heritage streetscapes and buildings – sometimes starting with the restoration of a single community landmark – can generate a whole range of economic benefits:

- create new and viable residential and commercial space
- provide venues for arts and cultural activities
- encourage relocation of housing and businesses to downtown
- discourage population movement out of small towns
- return underused or vacant buildings to municipal property tax rolls
- increase property values downtown and protect those in surrounding residential neighbourhoods
- create jobs in the retail and service sectors and in building trades
- increase tourism
- enhance civic pride and participation

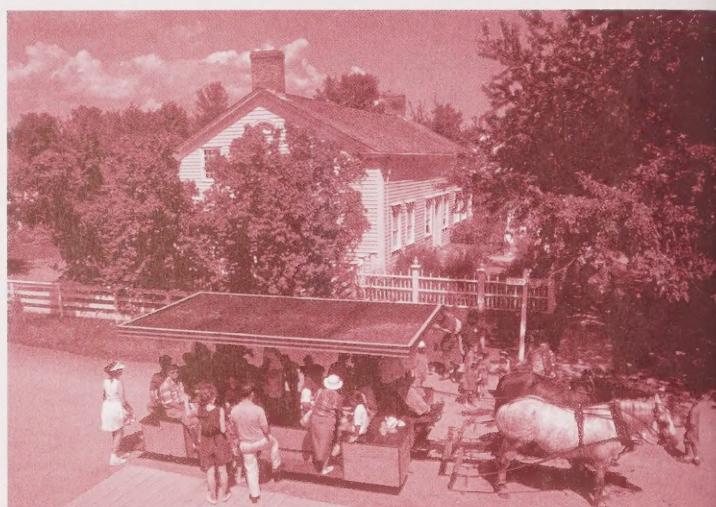
## Cultural heritage means tourist dollars for communities.

Tourists today are looking for new and authentic experiences and opportunities to combine travel and learning. Interest in museums, historic attractions and cultural festivals and events is growing. Cultural heritage tourism is now a major market.

### Upper Canada Village

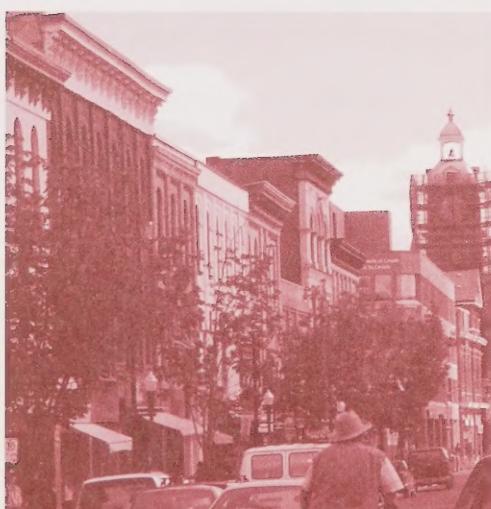
in Morrisburg

(Photo: Ontario Tourism Marketing Partnership)



The restoration of Peterborough's former market hall was a key part of the city's broader heritage conservation and economic development program.

(Photo courtesy of Erik Hanson, City of Peterborough)



**Rails-to-Trails** Even if you can no longer ride the rails, you can walk the trails – or hike, cycle, in-line skate, cross-country ski... Across Ontario, citizens' groups, conservation authorities and local and regional governments are developing former rail corridors into recreational trails. Rail lines make perfect trails because most are flat or gently graded and separate from road traffic. Former rail lines and trails reflect the early transportation and settlement history of the province. Rail-trails offer natural and cultural heritage experiences, linking green spaces, historic landmarks and communities. Trails also stimulate local economies through increased tourism.

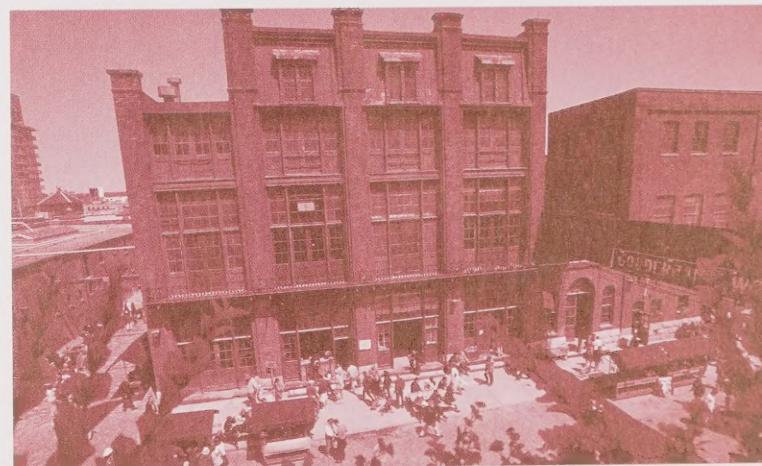
## Heritage buildings are adaptable to today's needs.

Many heritage buildings are still being used for the purpose for which they were built, as town halls, courthouses, churches, residences and shops. Continuing use not only maintains the sense of place and character of these buildings; it also helps to conserve them because few changes are required to accommodate modern needs.

Heritage buildings can, however, be adapted to a remarkable range of creative new uses. Increasingly, people are seeking out living and working spaces that offer something a little different. The unique features of heritage buildings fit the bill. In today's new economy, cultural amenities provide a draw to industry, and retiring baby boomers are choosing to move to historic cores where shopping, restaurants, cultural facilities and other amenities are within walking distance. In urban centres, factories and warehouses are being converted to new residential and commercial facilities. In

small towns, main street properties are being rehabilitated, often combining retail (downstairs) and residential spaces (upstairs), which is in keeping with the traditional use of these buildings.

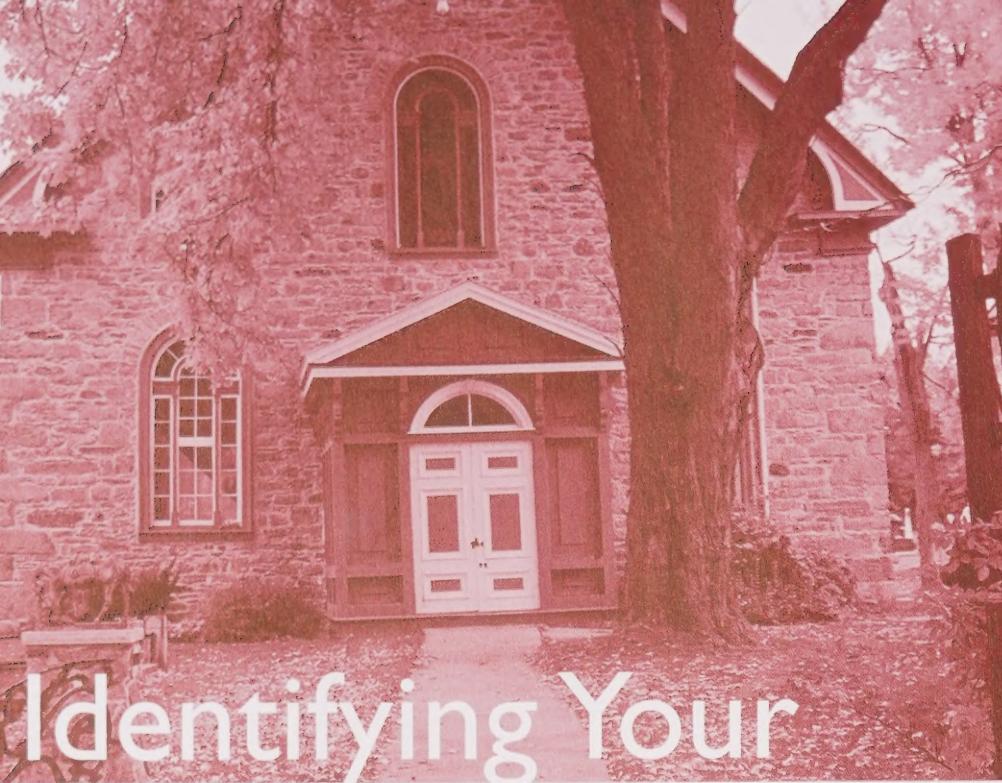
Rehabilitation work – including mechanical and electrical upgrades – contributes to Ontario's construction industry and creates the demand for a highly skilled labour force. Choosing to re-use older buildings over demolition supports a cleaner environment by easing the strain on our landfill sites.



The Historic Distillery District, Toronto  
(Photo: Ontario Tourism Marketing Partnership)

*“Valuing our diverse heritage inspires us, renews us and integrates creativity and productivity into our communities.”*

*- Paule Doucet, Heritage consultant and advocate*



The St. Andrew's Church,  
Williamstown  
(Photo: Ministry of Culture)

# Identifying Your Heritage

What are the cultural heritage resources in your community?

We often think of heritage in terms of the past, but we see heritage and interact with it on a regular basis, often without even realizing it. Cultural heritage is not only about researching our family history or visiting a community museum; it's walking through a cemetery, driving across an old bridge, attending a fall fair, working in an office in a refurbished factory, giving directions using local community landmarks.

Identifying specific local cultural heritage resources is the first step toward conserving and protecting them.

Historic buildings and other significant heritage resources have been lost because their importance was not recognized – or not recognized in time.

Part of taking stock is deciding as a community what resources are most important to current and future generations. Cultural heritage resources in your area may not only have local importance; they may be regionally, provincially, nationally or even internationally significant.

Cultural heritage resources can be:

- Buildings and structures
- Cemeteries
- Natural heritage
- Cultural heritage landscapes
- Archaeological sites, including marine archaeology
- Spiritual sites
- Cultural heritage resource collections
- Intangible heritage

And more...

## Buildings and Structures

Most easily recognizable as heritage assets are buildings, bridges, monuments and other structures. Referred to as built heritage, these resources reveal patterns of Ontario's history. Heritage properties give communities a sense of continuity and of place – they help put them on the map.

Heritage properties don't have to be old. There are newer buildings and structures all across the province that have cultural heritage value because of their design, cultural associations or contribution to a broader context.



West Montrose Covered Bridge,  
Waterloo Region (Photo: Ontario  
Tourism Marketing Partnership)

*About 17,000 properties have been designated under the Ontario Heritage Act, either individually or as part of Heritage Conservation Districts. This is just the tip of the iceberg... many more properties and districts have heritage value.*



Hudson Bay Company church and cemetery, Moosonee (Photo: Ontario Tourism Marketing Partnership)

## Cemeteries

Cemeteries are important and sacred places. They memorialize the people who built our communities, in which many of their descendants still live. Tombstones express past artistry and craftsmanship and provide useful information about early settlement, birth and death patterns and family histories. Cemeteries often incorporate green spaces and built heritage features, such as chapels, mausoleums or cenotaphs. While cemeteries are governed by the Cemeteries Act, over a hundred cemeteries have also been designated under the Ontario Heritage Act.

## Natural Heritage

Heritage is more than buildings and artifacts. The province's wetlands, woodlands, grasslands and geological land formations are natural heritage treasures that enrich our environment. The Ontario Heritage Trust conserves and protects natural heritage property through land ownership and conservation easements.

Natural features can have cultural value. Communities have recognized trees, hedgerows, woodlots and other features as "natural monuments" that deserve recognition and protection as cultural heritage resources.



The Ontario Heritage Trust protects natural heritage throughout Ontario, including the Bruce Trail. (Photo: Ontario Heritage Trust)

The oil heritage landscape of Oil Springs  
(Photo: Ministry of Culture)



## Cultural Heritage Landscapes

Cultural heritage landscapes reflect the interaction of people with their environment over time. These can take many forms – battlefields, parks, gardens, agricultural communities, sacred or traditional use sites, streetscapes, industrial areas...

As landscapes, they are more than the sum of their parts, encompassing cultural and natural features, archaeological sites, open spaces, even vistas. The relationship of public buildings, houses, fence lines, trees and open spaces to streets and roadways gives neighbourhoods their character and sense of place. The Queenston Heights Battlefield, the remarkable oil heritage landscape in Petrolia and Oil Springs, and the historic village of Williamstown in South Glengarry Township are examples of cultural heritage landscapes. Others like the Rideau Canal corridor, cut across municipal boundaries.

# Archaeological Sites

Ontario has a rich archaeological heritage that ranges from aboriginal hunting and fishing camps and villages, to battlefields such as those from the War of 1812, to the exploration and pioneer settlement history of the last four centuries.

An archaeological site is any site that contains an artifact or other physical evidence of past human use or activity that is of cultural heritage value or interest.

Archaeological sites can be found anywhere that may have attracted humans in the past. It is important to note that archaeological sites are not just found in farmer's fields but can be present in urban settings as well. These sites tell the story of the history and development of the local area. Many built heritage properties contain archaeological components that can reveal information about the occupants.

Archaeological sites consist of both individual artifacts and cultural features, such as the stains and other marks in the soil left behind by decayed palisades and house posts and storage pits. These artifacts and features reveal where people lived and what they did.

All of this can be used to interpret the age of the site, the size of the occupation, the patterns of subsistence, land settlement, trade, and belief systems of the sites' inhabitants.

Since archaeological sites in Ontario are usually below the ground, they are not readily visible. Someone needs to have physically located and identified a site for its location to be known. The number of sites formally recorded for a given area will be based only on the extent of

previous investigations carried out by archaeologists.

These sites were not left randomly, however. Geographic features such as water and topography, as well as the location of historic transportation routes, early pioneer settlements or homesteads, influenced past peoples and where they decided to live.

The Spadina House Museum in Toronto and the Ontario Heritage Trust hold annual summer programs, such as the archaeology "digs" for students guided by licensed archaeologists.  
(Photo: Ontario Heritage Trust)



## Marine Archaeological Sites

Archaeological sites also exist under water. Marine sites include lake-side camps, submerged habitation sites and shipwrecks. Shipwrecks are a significant part of our underwater archaeological heritage with as many as 4,000-5,000 wrecks in Ontario waters.

Marine archaeological sites are unique time capsules – often better preserved than land sites because they are protected by cold, fresh water. However, marine heritage resources can easily be degraded or destroyed.

## Cultural Heritage Resource Collections

Collections consisting of artifacts and other items of cultural heritage value can be found in every community in museums, historical societies, archives and libraries.

These collections can include family and land records, photographs, maps, tools, household utensils, farm and industrial equipment, furniture, artwork and the artifacts and other documentation recovered from archaeological sites.

## Intangible Heritage

Cultural heritage includes intangible or non-material resources like traditions, ceremonies, attitudes, beliefs, family histories, stories, dances, games, names and language. These are at the heart of cultural heritage and reflect our individual and collective identity and our diversity as Ontarians.



Building a canoe at Old Fort William, Thunder Bay  
(Photo: Ontario Tourism Marketing Partnership)



Chieftwood - the birthplace of poet Pauline Johnson, Six Nations of the Grand River Territory

(Photo courtesy of Chieftwood Museum)

# Protecting Heritage Properties

Once you know what cultural heritage resources you have, the next step is to determine how best to protect, conserve and manage them.

While we tend to think of cultural heritage resources individually, in fact they are interwoven into the fabric of our communities and need to be considered in a broader cultural, community or landscape context. This is especially important in terms of planning for their protection.

## The Ontario Heritage Act

- Ontario Heritage Trust
- Designation of properties and districts
- The role of the Conservation Review Board and Ontario Municipal Board
- Easements
- Purchase and lease
- Archaeological sites and collections management

## The Planning Act

- The Provincial Policy Statement
- Official plans
- Secondary plans
- Zoning
- Interim control
- Community improvement

## Other planning tools

- Municipal cultural planning
- Cultural heritage master plans
- Design guidelines
- Density transfer, Building Code flexibility and more

*Note: Before acting on any of the information provided in this guide, municipalities should refer to the actual wording of the legislation and consult their legal counsel for specific interpretations.*

# The Ontario Heritage Act

The Ontario Heritage Act provides a framework for the protection of heritage properties, including archaeological sites. It defines the municipal and provincial roles in heritage conservation, including the role of two provincial agencies: the Ontario Heritage Trust and the Conservation Review Board.

In April, 2005, the act was amended to provide stronger protection for cultural heritage properties, as explained in the following paragraphs.

## Ontario Heritage Trust

The Ontario Heritage Act sets out the role of the Ontario Heritage Trust (formerly called the Ontario Heritage Foundation), which works with many community partners to protect and promote Ontario's heritage.

The Ontario Heritage Trust has a broad range of programs and activities, from restoration of heritage buildings and conservation of natural properties to distinctive plaques and conservation easements, to recognition programs and Doors Open Ontario. Perhaps its most well-known restoration project was the renovation of the Elgin and Winter Garden Theatre in Toronto - the world's last remaining operating double-decker theatre.

## Municipal Heritage Committees

Under the Ontario Heritage Act, municipalities\* can form Municipal Heritage Committees to advise council on local heritage issues. These are

volunteer committees made up of five or more members – usually council members and residents – appointed by council. Community Heritage Ontario is the umbrella organization for Municipal Heritage Committees across the province ([www.heritageontario.org](http://www.heritageontario.org))



The Elgin and Winter Garden Theatre in Toronto is owned by the Ontario Heritage Trust. (Photo: Ontario Heritage Trust)

Municipal Heritage Committees assist council in exercising its powers under the Ontario Heritage Act and carrying out other heritage preservation activities. For example, they:

- research and compile inventories of heritage resources
- advise council on designation and alteration of heritage properties
- assist in heritage planning
- provide information and education
- liaise between property owners and council

\*The Ontario Heritage Act defines "municipality" as "a local municipality and includes a band under the Indian Act (Canada) that is permitted to control, manage and expend its revenue money under section 69 of that act."

A full listing of the Municipal Heritage Committees across the province is available on the Ministry of Culture website at [www.culture.gov.on.ca](http://www.culture.gov.on.ca)

## Register of Cultural Heritage Properties

Following the amendments to the Ontario Heritage Act in 2005, municipalities must keep a register of property in the municipality that is of cultural heritage value or interest.

These registers aren't static; they constantly evolve as heritage properties are added, altered or lost, or as new information is discovered about resources already on the list.



Many municipalities are recognizing the need to identify rural heritage properties and list them on municipal registers, especially in the face of increasing development pressures.

(Photo: Ontario Tourism Marketing Partnership)

Heritage property registers have many benefits, they:

- help building officials and planners identify heritage issues up-front.
- help communities evaluate properties and areas that may need protection now or in the future.
- promote a community's awareness of its unique landmarks and landscapes.

## Designation – Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act

Council can pass by-laws under the Ontario Heritage Act designating individual properties of cultural heritage value or interest.

Designation is usually recommended by council's Municipal Heritage Committee, but anyone in the community can request that a property be designated – councillors, property owners, a Business Improvement Association and so on. Where a Municipal Heritage Committee exists, council must seek the advice of the committee on property proposed for designation.

*The City of Brantford has developed an on-line heritage inventory that is not only used for land-use planning – it is accessible to the public for research and tourism purposes, and is being used to support school curriculum and youth education programs. ([www.brantford.ca](http://www.brantford.ca))*

A wide range of heritage properties can be designated individually under the Ontario Heritage Act – properties that include buildings, archaeological sites, landscapes, cemeteries, trees, parks, ruins, lamp-posts, gates, and more. Designation helps protect the heritage character and value of these properties.

The former Paisley Town Hall, Thunder Bay's Chippewa Park Carousel, the former Nativity School in Cornwall, the Comfort Maple Tree in Pelham, Lyndhurst's stone bridge, and Streetsville's cenotaph are just a few examples of properties that have been designated under the Ontario Heritage Act for their cultural heritage value.

Designation doesn't restrict the use of a property or obligate owners to open it to the public. However, it does require owners to seek council's approval for property alterations that are likely to affect the heritage attributes of the property described in the designation bylaw. If council denies approval, owners have the right to appeal to the Conservation Review Board. After holding a hearing, the Board makes recommendations to council, but the final decision rests with the municipality.

With the amendments to the act in 2005, council can also prevent, rather than just delay, the demolition of a building or structure on a designated heritage property. If council refuses to

approve an application for the demolition, the owner may appeal to the Ontario Municipal Board.

## Heritage Conservation Districts – Part V of the Ontario Heritage Act

The Square in Goderich, Lowertown West in Ottawa, Barriefield Village in Kingston and Upper Doon Village in Kitchener are examples of heritage conservation districts designated under the Ontario Heritage Act.

The Comfort Maple Tree in Pelham has been designated under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act.  
(Photo: Ministry of Culture)



A 1998 study of 3,000 designated properties in 24 Ontario communities found that:

- designation did not have a negative impact on property values
- the rate of sale of designated properties was as good or better than the general market
- the value of heritage properties tended to resist downturns in the general market

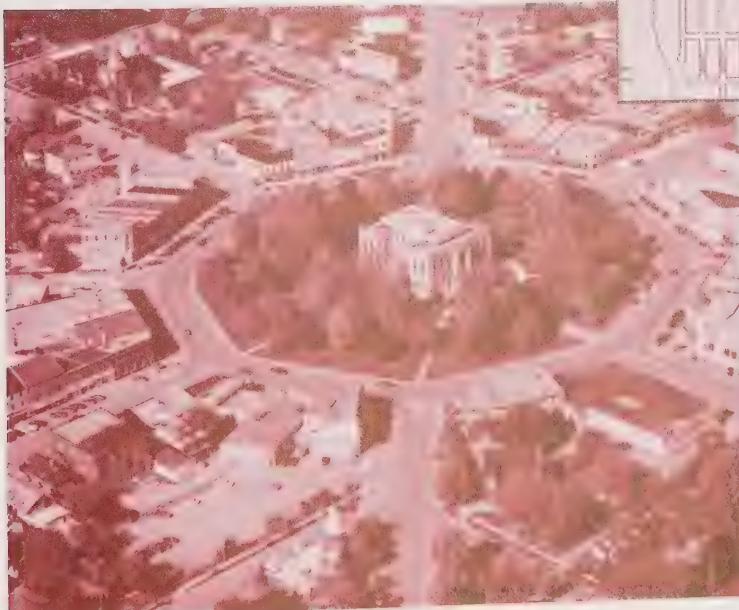
(Robert Shipley, "Heritage Designation and Property Values: Is There an Effect?", *International Journal of Heritage Studies*, Volume 6, No. 1, 2000, pp. 83-100.)

Municipalities with designated heritage conservation districts undertake studies and develop plans to guide change in these areas. Municipalities can now incorporate heritage district plans into their official plan (or a secondary plan) to integrate heritage conservation into mainstream planning.

Owners of property in designated heritage conservation districts must also obtain council's approval for alterations, new construction or demolition. If approval is denied, owners can appeal to the Ontario Municipal Board, which can grant or refuse approval.

Property owners may worry that a heritage designation will delay approvals for change, but this doesn't have to be the case if a clear process is in place. For example, a one-stop service could combine building permits with approvals for heritage alterations. In some municipalities, minor alterations are processed by staff with heritage expertise without the requirement for a full council approval process.

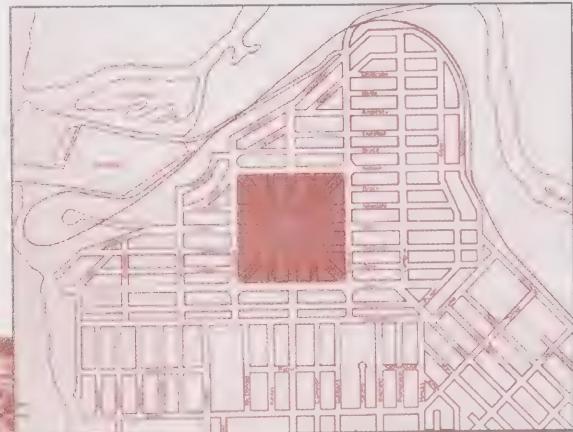
Aerial view of "The Square" in Goderich (Photo courtesy of Gord Strathdee, Town of St. Marys)



## Conservation Review Board

The Ontario Heritage Act sets out the role of the Conservation Review Board, which conducts hearings and makes recommendations to council in respect of number of heritage matters under the act.

Most hearings deal with objections to the heritage designation of a property. The Conservation Review Board is an advisory body only; unlike the Ontario Municipal Board, it does not decide matters referred to it but rather makes recommendations to municipal councils.



The "Square" in Goderich, a heritage conservation district plan Prepared by Nicholas Hill (1976)

## Ontario Municipal Board

The Ontario Municipal Board also plays a role under the Ontario Heritage Act. It hears appeals respecting municipal by-laws designating heritage conservation districts and the demolition of buildings or other structures on designated heritage properties and properties in heritage conservation districts.

Conservation Review Board members can be cross-appointed to the Ontario Municipal Board on matters relating to the Ontario Heritage Act.

## Demolition Control

As indicated above, an owner of a designated heritage property or a property in a Heritage Conservation District must obtain council's approval before demolishing or removing a building or other structure. This provides an opportunity for council and community members to try to negotiate alternative solutions with the property owner. If no agreement can be reached, council can refuse to approve the demolition or removal. The owner may then appeal the matter to the Ontario Municipal Board.

## Easements

Under the Ontario Heritage Act, council can pass by-laws entering into easements or covenants – voluntary legal agreements – with heritage property owners. Heritage easement agreements, also known as heritage conservation agreements, are the most effective way for municipalities to protect their most valuable heritage resources.

Easement agreements set out requirements for maintaining a property or specific heritage features of a property. The agreement is registered on the title to the property and is binding on future owners.

Entering into an easement agreement assures owners that their heritage properties will be protected over the long term.

Easement agreements can be used in a variety of ways. To protect their investment, municipalities can make an easement agreement a condition of funding restoration projects. To protect heritage features that are important to the community, easement agreements can in some circumstances be required in return for granting municipal planning approvals or exemptions, such as density bonuses. As well, easement agreements can be used to protect surplus municipal heritage buildings when sold.

The Ontario Heritage Trust can also enter into easement agreements. It currently holds close to 200 easement agreements to protect provincially significant cultural and natural heritage properties and archaeological sites.

An Ontario Heritage Trust conservation easement protects the Sharon Temple. (Photo: Ontario Heritage Trust)



## Purchase or Lease

Councils can pass by-laws under the Ontario Heritage Act to buy, lease or expropriate designated heritage properties. For example, a municipality could buy a threatened building and restore it, then use it for municipal purposes, sell it with an easement to protect it in the long-term, or rent it. For instance, the historic Willistead Manor, restored by the City of Windsor, is now used as a meeting/conference facility.

## Archaeological Sites

All land use activities can have an impact on heritage resources, including archaeological sites. In Ontario,

legislation and legislative instruments, including the Provincial Policy Statement made under the Planning Act, the Environmental Assessment Act and the Aggregate Resources Act require that archaeological sites that may be impacted by an undertaking or a change in land use be properly identified and conserved. These requirements are not intended to constrain or stop development, but rather to ensure that the vital information from the archaeological remains is retrieved.

Although we do not always know if a particular property contains archaeological sites, we can determine if it has the archaeological potential. Using checklists developed by the Ministry of Culture, non-specialists can determine whether an area is likely to contain archaeological resources.

If a property proposed for development has potential for archaeological resources, a licensed archaeologist must be contracted to undertake an archaeological assessment. All such work must be completed and reported on to the Ministry of Culture. The ministry is responsible for reviewing the report to ensure that cultural heritage concerns have been met for the subject property and that the work carried out meets the necessary requirements. The ministry requirements must be met before any servicing, grading, topsoil stripping, landscaping or other land disturbance may occur on the property.

It is important to note that it is an offence to alter a known archaeological site without a license issued by the Ministry of Culture. Anyone who alters a site or removes an artifact from a site without a licence may be subject to fines or imprisonment under the Ontario Heritage Act.



For thousands of years, aboriginal people have lived and gathered on the banks of the Rainy River at Kay-Nah-Chi-Wah-Nung, "Place of the Long Rapids." (Photo: Ministry of Culture)

## Provincial Archaeological Sites Database

The Ministry of Culture maintains this database of about 17,000 registered sites across the province. About 600 to 700 new sites are added each year as a result of archaeological exploration. Sites include Aboriginal hunting and fishing camps, villages and sacred places, as well as battlefields, remnants of pioneer cabins, ruins, shipwrecks and other places where there is evidence of past human activity.

To protect these areas, the database of site locations is not publicly accessible. However, municipal staff can enter into data sharing agreements with the ministry in order to access this information for planning purposes.

## Collections Management

Across Ontario, community museums, archives and other organizations such as historical societies, conserve artifacts and documents that are important to their communities and to the province.

The collection records of these institutions are vital heritage assets.

## The Planning Act

The Planning Act sets out the ground rules for land use planning in Ontario. The Planning Act recognizes that heritage protection and conservation is a key component of good land use planning. Considering heritage early in the planning process avoids last minute efforts to save valuable community resources. It also makes it easier to assess and accommodate them. Often, heritage features can be incorporated into new developments, adding to their value and attractiveness.

The best way for approval authorities to address heritage resources is to know their location and significance in advance of receiving a planning application. An inventory of significant heritage resources and a cultural heritage master plan for your municipality can help you to be proactive and to plan effectively.



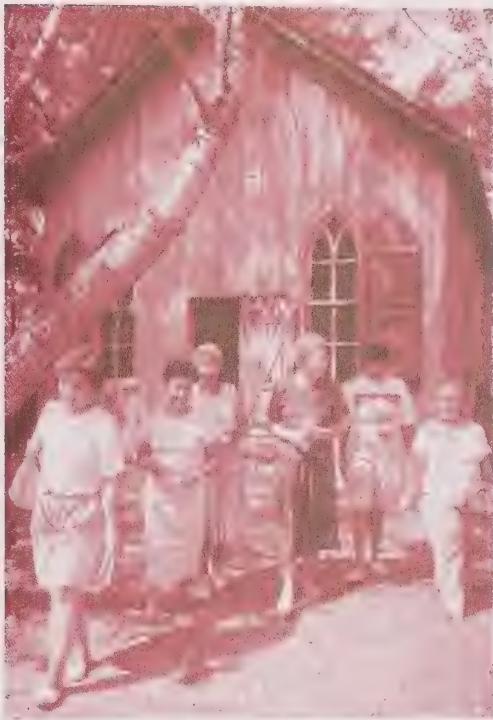
The Ontario Heritage Trust is the custodian of more than 580,000 archaeological artifacts. (Photo: Ontario Heritage Trust)

*“Conservation is not a tactic for stopping overall change... rather, it is acknowledgement of change, a strategy for directing change to keep it from causing damage, waste, or loss. Conservation seeks to protect what is of value.”*

*- Continuity with Change (1981): Ontario Ministry of Culture and Recreation, Mark Fram and John Weiler, eds., xi.*

## Provincial Policy Statement

Section 2.6 *Cultural Heritage and Archaeology*, identifies the conservation of built heritage, cultural heritage landscapes and archaeological resources as provincial priorities for land use planning. The Planning Act requires that decisions affecting planning matters that commenced on or after March 1, 2005, "shall be consistent with" the Provincial Policy Statement. This means that cultural heritage **must** be given proper consideration in the planning process.



Uncle Tom's Cabin

(Photo: Ontario Tourism Marketing Partnership)

## Official Plans

One important way of incorporating heritage conservation into land use planning is through the municipal official plan. Most local municipalities in Ontario have an official plan. The plan reflects a community's vision for change and growth, and sets out goals and policies for land use and development.

The official plan should contain policies for natural and cultural heritage conservation. In addition to broader goals, official plans usually set out policies to guide development, while the zoning bylaw spells out implementation details. For example, in terms of heritage, most plans include policies on how to carry out heritage property and archaeological impact assessments, which help council and property owners to be aware up-front of any special requirements within the plan area.

Secondary plans usually result from amendments to the official plan and allow for specific developments or zones - often covering a large geographic area in more detail. Secondary plans can also be used to recognize and protect unique heritage features or archaeologically sensitive areas. Factoring heritage conservation into secondary plans helps council and property owners to be aware up-front of any special requirements within the plan area.

*"To make heritage conservation appealing, councillors must ensure that the municipal official plan contains strong policies for the protection of its inventory of heritage resources and provision for tax incentives, grants, and bonus privileges for its heritage housing stock....Up-front knowledge and information make heritage conservation easier work for everyone - politicians, developers, residents, and volunteers."*

*- Jean Haalboom, Councillor for the Regional Municipality of Waterloo*

For example, the City of Mississauga has a secondary plan for the historic commercial core, Streetsville. Streetsville was originally a separate village, but was absorbed into the city as a result of amalgamation in 1974.

## Zoning

Through zoning by-laws, municipalities regulate types of land use (for example, residential or commercial), density controls, building size and so on. The Planning Act also allows council to pass zoning by-laws prohibiting the use of land or construction in areas where there are significant archaeological resources. Zoning can also be used creatively and strategically to stimulate reinvestment in declining historic areas.

The City of Ottawa has a specific heritage “overlay” zoning to protect historic areas. It regulates features, such as building heights, footprints, setbacks and additions.

## Interim Control

Interim control by-laws put a temporary freeze on some land uses in a specific area to give municipalities time to assess or study the area. The freeze can be

imposed for a year with a maximum extension of a second year. Interim control can be used to assess the impact of re-zoning on cultural heritage resources. For example, in the City of Cambridge an interim control bylaw was used on a vacant lot in Galt to review the effect of a proposed development on this historic downtown.

The secondary plan for the King-Parliament area and the St. Lawrence neighbourhood urban design guidelines in Toronto addresses such features as building size, setbacks and signage to preserve the character of the community.

(Photo courtesy of the City of Toronto, Urban Design)



*In the mid-1990s, the City of Toronto gave “the Kings”, two large former industrial areas to the east and west of downtown, special official plan and zoning designations to promote redevelopment and re-use of vacant buildings. Density controls were removed and land use permission expanded to allow for almost any use – residential, live/work, commercial or light industrial.*

*To protect the heritage buildings in these areas, a new bonus was devised as an alternative to density bonuses. It allowed development to exceed the building envelope and indirectly obtain more floor space and flexibility to design around existing buildings. Design guidelines were also adopted to maintain some of the areas’ historic features.*

*Today, “the Kings” are models for how creative approaches to zoning can revitalize heritage areas.*

## Community Improvement

Council can pass by-laws identifying community improvement project areas and develop plans to revitalize them. These areas can be targeted for a variety of improvements to land, buildings, traffic flow, parking and so on. Municipalities can also provide grants or loans to property owners within community improvement areas to help them cover the costs of repairs or rehabilitation.

Community improvement plans are a good opportunity to identify any heritage resources within the project area and plan for their conservation. For example, London's community improvement plan for its downtown core includes support for heritage in the form of façade restoration loans, tax back grants, and grants to upgrade buildings to fire code and building standards.

## Development Applications

Cultural heritage resources can be affected by a wide range of development applications, including applications for infill, severance, condominium and plans of subdivision. It is common for municipalities to require heritage impact and archaeological assessments on properties proposed for development. These assessments determine whether archaeological sites are present and how best to incorporate or document significant heritage features, such as buildings or ruins.

Subdivision agreements and site plan control can be used to ensure significant heritage features are preserved as part of development.

It is to everyone's benefit to know early on in the development application process whether there are heritage issues involved. Having the facts up-front allows municipalities to know when impact assessments are needed and, where appropriate, to mitigate any harmful effects on cultural heritage resources. And it avoids last-minute surprises for property owners and developers.



A historic barn is conserved as part of a subdivision development in Ottawa.  
(Photo: Ministry of Culture)

*The City of Cambridge passed a development charges bylaw exempting the development or re-development of properties designated under the Ontario Heritage Act from all development charges. The bylaw also provides for a development allowance (equal to the floor area for non-residential uses or number of units for residential uses within an existing designated building) to be credited to any additional development or re-development on a designated property provided the existing building is retained and is an integral part of the development or re-development of the property.*

## Other Planning Tools

### Municipal Cultural Planning

Heritage is a key consideration in municipal planning, and can work with other aspects of culture – including the arts and cultural industries – to strengthen the quality of life of our communities. There is a growing interest among municipal leaders and decision-makers in more integrated, holistic approaches to planning for culture at the municipal level.

The City of Peterborough, for example, completed a comprehensive planning process for arts, culture, heritage and recreation in 2001. The resulting report, Vision 2010, included detailed recommendations to help coordinate planning and delivery of programs and encourage partnerships between municipal departments including Community Services (Recreation and Heritage Culture Divisions), Planning and Development Services, Public Works, and community organizations with an interest in the arts, culture, heritage and recreation sectors.

### Cultural Heritage Master Plans

A cultural heritage master plan allows you to take stock of all the heritage resources within your municipality. Master plans are often developed at the regional level because archaeological sites and cultural landscapes can cut across local boundaries.

A cultural heritage master plan expresses your community's long-term vision and goals for heritage conservation. It sets out specific strategies, policies and procedures for managing and sustaining your heritage resources.

With the help of licensed archaeologists, about 10 Ontario municipalities have developed **archaeological master plans**.

These plans contain:

- inventories of known archaeological sites
- maps showing where there is the potential for sites that would require an assessment in advance of development
- policies and procedures to guide the municipality in addressing archaeological resources in the development process



The Rideau Canal creates a unique cultural landscape that cuts across many jurisdictional boundaries.  
(Photo: Ministry of Culture)

These plans can be integrated into a broader cultural heritage master plan, which would include built heritage resources, cultural heritage landscapes and cultural heritage sites and facilities.

In turn, integrating the cultural heritage master plan into the official plan makes master planning a more effective planning and conservation tool.

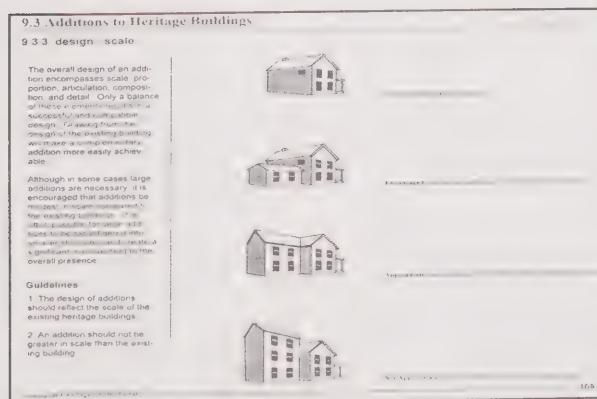
## Design Guidelines for Heritage Areas

To preserve the special character of heritage areas, some municipalities have developed design guidelines. For example, the Town of Markham has detailed design guidelines for the Unionville Heritage Conservation District, providing guidance for building style and height, setbacks, building materials, window and door detail, porch style, fencing, garages and so on.

## Density Transfer

In certain cases, it makes sense to work out agreements with developers and other property owners that would encourage them to conserve particular heritage properties. One example of this is “the transfer of density.”

**Unionville District Guidelines**  
(Credit: Unionville Heritage Conservation District Plan, Town of Markham)



Essentially, it involves placing restrictions on a heritage property to ensure that it is properly conserved, in exchange for allowing the developer to increase the amount of floor space or number of residential units they are allowed to create on another property.

## Building Code Flexibility

(Building Code Act Regulation)

Enforcing the Building Code is a municipal responsibility. A regulation under the code provides some flexibility for repairing or altering heritage buildings. Certain code requirements may be impractical for historic restoration or detrimental to preserving a building's character. In these cases, building officials can approve alternative requirements. For example, a sprinkler system was installed in the Ontario legislature in order to retain the historic railings and open staircases, and still meet fire safety standards.



The former mill in Elora is now operated as an inn and restaurant.

(Photo: Ontario Tourism Marketing Partnership)

## Signage (Municipal Act, 2001)

Signage can help a community celebrate and promote its unique heritage. Street names are a good example. Effective signage is also important to direct visitors to heritage sites.

Several municipalities have used their sign bylaw powers under the Municipal Act, 2001 to help preserve the character of heritage conservation districts or historic areas – for example, by requiring signage that doesn't detract from original storefronts. Markham, Goderich and Niagara-on-the-Lake have sign by-laws for their historic commercial areas.

## Environmental Assessment

The Environmental Assessment Act provides for the protection, conservation and wise management of the environment in Ontario.

“Environment” is broadly defined, and includes cultural heritage. The act promotes sound environmental planning by requiring environmental assessments for public and government review before particular projects can go forward. Full environmental assessments are required for large projects such as provincial highways, and “scoped-down” assessments are required for smaller-scale projects like municipal roads, sewers, watermains, etc. Under the Environmental Assessment Act, any cultural heritage resources that may be impacted by the project must be identified as part of the environmental assessment.

Where there are archaeological concerns, for example, an archaeological survey must be done, the resources must be identified and evaluated and recommendations must be made in order to reduce the impacts on those resources.

## Other Statutes

Municipal councils may adopt further measures and procedures available for cultural heritage resource conservation under other planning legislation. These include other heritage conservation measures and procedures outlined in the Municipal Act, the Environmental Assessment Act, the Aggregate Resources Act, the Niagara Escarpment Act and other statutes.



The Black Bay Bridge, Thunder Bay  
(Photo: Ministry of Culture)



St. Raphael's Ruins,  
Glengarry County  
(Photo: Ministry of Culture)

# Providing Support for Heritage Conservation

In order to provide benefit and enjoyment to the community, heritage properties need to be properly maintained and conserved. Many of these properties are privately owned, and providing financial and other support can make a real difference in helping owners to care for their properties.

The Ontario government provides a range of financial incentives for heritage properties through the programs of individual ministries and agencies. For instance, the Ontario Trillium Foundation, an agency of the Ministry of Culture, provides funding toward all kinds of heritage projects led by not-for-profit organizations and small municipalities. The federal government also provides financial incentives for heritage properties targeted to both for-profit and not-for-profit organizations.

Municipalities have also implemented a variety of different strategies at the local level to encourage investment in heritage properties. These include:

- heritage property tax relief
- grants and loans
- tax back grants
- revolving funds
- heritage endowment funds
- public works

## Heritage Property Tax Relief

Under the Municipal Act, 2001, municipalities can pass by-laws to offer tax relief of between 10% and 40% to owners of eligible heritage properties. Many municipalities, such as the City of Kitchener, have established heritage property tax relief programs in conjunction with other tax relief measures to support economic development and the revitalization of downtowns and heritage areas. The province shares in the cost of the program by funding the education portion of the property tax relief.

## Grants and Loans

Under the Ontario Heritage Act, council can pass by-laws providing grants or loans to owners of designated heritage properties to help them cover the costs of repair and restoration. Councils can attach their own terms and conditions to funding. Toronto, Ottawa, Windsor, Petrolia and Sault Ste. Marie have established such programs.



Clergue Blockhouse,  
Sault Ste. Marie  
(Photo: Ontario Heritage Trust)

Municipalities also have the power under the Planning Act to provide grants or loans to property owners in community improvement areas to assist them with rehabilitation projects.

Several Ontario municipalities have used their granting powers under the Ontario Heritage Act and the Planning Act to offset the increase in municipal property taxes – in part or in whole – that can result from improvements to heritage properties.

Usually, no money changes hands, as the “grant” is actually a tax relief, which allows the property owner to retain the pre-restoration tax rate for a set period of time – for example, five to 10 years.

In all cases, owners must apply the total grant to approved conservation work on designated properties and are subject to any other terms and conditions prescribed by council. For example, if the building on a designated property is demolished before the grant period lapses, the grant must be repaid to the municipality. Cobourg, Hamilton, London and Perth have all established these types of grant programs.

### Revolving Funds

Some municipalities have provided seed money to foundations or other not-for-profit organizations to set up a revolving fund to support heritage conservation. A revolving fund is a pool of capital created and reserved for a specific purpose with the condition that money will be returned to the fund and “revolved” to new projects.

*The City of Thunder Bay has put together a package of incentives to stimulate property rehabilitation in its downtown cores. It includes:*

- *100% tax back grants to offset municipal tax increases resulting from property improvements*
- *100% fee rebates for most planning approvals and building permits when a project is completed*
- *interest-free loans (\$15,000 maximum) to cover 50% of the cost of restoring building façades*
- *grants (\$10,000 maximum) of up to 50% of the cost of feasibility studies to determine potential adaptive re-uses of certain buildings*

Revolving funds can be used to provide loans to heritage property owners for restoration; as loans are repaid, the money is returned to the fund and loaned out again. Loans are usually at a lower interest rate and secured by a mortgage registered against the title to the land in the applicable land registry office. Revolving funds can also be used to buy neglected historic property. After the property is restored, it can be sold or leased and then the income used to buy another threatened property.

### **Heritage Endowment Funds**

Through seed money or other means, municipalities can help foundations establish endowment funds for heritage conservation. Foundations or other not-for-profit organizations have the advantage of soliciting volunteers and funding from sources that are not always available to municipal governments.

Endowment funds can support a variety of local conservation projects – both capital and non-capital – and over time, become significant sources of income through wise investment. They can also be attractive to donors whose contributions help ensure the future of heritage property in the community.

The London Community Foundation administers the London Endowment for Heritage Fund, which provides grants for conservation of all kinds of heritage – architectural, archaeological, moveable (such as artifacts), cultural heritage landscapes and natural heritage. Of the original funding for the endowment, half was raised by the London Community Foundation and half provided by the city.

### **Public Works**

Municipalities routinely undertake public works that may have an impact on cultural heritage resources. Public works projects can be used as catalysts for the sensitive revitalization of heritage areas, by helping to conserve their special character. A municipality may also encourage owners in heritage districts to rehabilitate their designated properties by agreeing to match their efforts with public improvements such as trees and landscaping, street furniture, lighting, cobblestones or other special paving, and so on.



Amherstburg Black History Museum  
(Photo: Ontario Tourism Marketing Partnership)

# Community Partners in Conservation

There are many institutions and organizations that have a role to play in heritage conservation at the local level including:

- municipalities
- community museums
- historical societies and other cultural organizations
- archives and
- libraries

Community volunteers are invaluable to each of these organizations, whether it be as Municipal Heritage Committee members, property owners, volunteer interpreters, researchers, and more. In Ontario, it is thanks to the hard work of thousands of volunteers that our rich heritage is conserved and celebrated.

## Municipalities

Municipal councillors and staff make or influence decisions that can have a tremendous impact on heritage.

Under the Ontario Heritage Act, municipal council has the power to:

- establish a Municipal Heritage Committee to advise on local heritage issues
- designate properties or districts that have heritage value

- issue or refuse permits to alter or demolish heritage properties
- amend or repeal designation by-laws
- enforce building standards
- buy or lease designated property
- provide grants or loans to designated property owners
- enter into easement agreements with owners to maintain their heritage properties

Staff roles vary from municipality to municipality, but heritage conservation can involve almost everyone from the clerk's office to the fire department. Municipalities set municipal budgets for heritage conservation, make land use planning and development decisions, implement heritage conservation policies in official plans, operate museums and archives, and support a broad range of other heritage activities. Here are some examples of how different areas may be involved:

- **clerk's office**
  - prepares heritage-related by-laws; may provide administrative support to council's heritage advisory committee
- **planning department**
  - reviews development applications, which may affect cultural heritage

resources including archaeological sites or areas of archaeological potential; implements heritage policies in the official plan

- **economic development and tourism departments**
  - promote community heritage and develop incentives for development and conservation
- **building official/property manager**
  - reviews building permits for heritage properties; manages municipally-owned heritage properties
- **bylaw enforcement**
  - enforces property standards and other by-laws affecting heritage property
- **treasury**
  - reviews and manages the municipal budget for heritage conservation
- **legal**
  - registers heritage-related by-laws; advises the municipality on legal issues related to heritage conservation
- **public works**
  - manages municipal infrastructure, which may have an impact on archaeological sites and heritage properties
- **parks department**
  - may have heritage properties in its care
- **cemetery board**
  - manages historic cemeteries
- **library**
  - holds collections on local history
- **fire department**
  - inspects historic properties for safety

## Community Museums

Almost every community in Ontario has at least one museum that tells its story. Most of these museums are municipally

owned and operated, supported by community members who volunteer thousands of hours every year. As stewards of our cultural heritage, museums collect, research, conserve, exhibit and interpret a wide range of objects and archival materials. Many museums are located in historic buildings, like Toronto's First Post Office, Glanmore in Belleville in an 1880s Second Empire style mansion, or the Gore Bay Museum on Manitoulin Island in the former jailhouse.

Ontario's community museums provide opportunities for learning and enjoyment to over two million visitors a year. Through exhibits, educational programs and special events, museums bring Ontario's history to life.

By engaging all sectors of the community in their activities, services and programs, museums are key partners in community development. Whether it be the Dufferin County Museum and Archives, showcasing the agricultural heritage of that community, or the Red Lake Museum, depicting the rich heritage of the Cree and Ojibway peoples together with the development of a gold mining town, community museums reflect the identity and spirit of their respective regions.

For over 20 years, the Ministry of Culture has supported community museums through its Community Museum Operating Grant (CMOG) program. In order to receive annual operating funding, museums are required to meet the ministry's Operating Standards for Community Museums in Ontario.

The Ontario Museums Association ([www.museumsontario.com](http://www.museumsontario.com)) also provides resources, training and support to community museums across the province.

These sites should be viewed as community assets. They are used and supported by residents and visitors alike, and act as an important component of the cultural mosaic of the communities they serve.

## Historical Societies

Historical societies are champions of Ontario's heritage. They research it, preserve it, promote it. Some societies focus on local history, such as genealogy, architecture, archaeology and folklore; others organize around specific themes, such as marine, railway or agricultural history. Many groups maintain archival materials and artifacts that are important to their communities.

Through displays, speakers, publications, open houses, walking tours, fairs and a host of other activities, historical societies make learning about history fun and accessible. These are just a few examples of their activities:

- The Aurora and District Historical Society hosts an annual fundraiser, the Candlelight Tour of Homes to support the restoration of historic Hillary House



Dufferin County Museum & Archives (Photo courtesy of John C. Carter)

- The Culinary Historians of Ontario have an information network for foodways research and produce a newsletter
- The Kingston Historical Society has published an Illustrated Guide to Monuments, Memorials & Markers in the Kingston Area, recording the history of the Kingston area
- The Chatham-Kent Black Historical Society has a heritage room and resource centre to help tell the story of Chatham's black community
- The Latchford/Montreal River Heritage Preservation Society annually presents Latchford Heritage Logging Days
- The Smith Township Historical Society has established a Heritage Learning Centre in its local library.

About 600 historical societies are represented by the Ontario Historical Society ([www.ontariohistoricalsociety.ca](http://www.ontariohistoricalsociety.ca)).

The Ministry of Culture supports historical societies through its Heritage Organization Development Grant (HODG) program.

Some municipalities support their local historical societies through grants, services or the use of municipal resources.

## Archives

There are at least 200 archives in Ontario – in municipalities, First Nations, community museums, universities, libraries, hospitals and private companies. Under various pieces

of legislation, municipalities must keep certain records and allow access to them. For example, the Municipal Act, 2001 requires resolutions, reports, minutes and by-laws of council and its committees to be made publicly available.

Archives are storehouses of evidence and documentary heritage that can supply records that are often needed for land use planning, environmental assessments, compiling heritage inventories, drafting by-laws and assisting in the day-to-day governance of a municipality.

Archives also contribute to tourism, drawing people to the community who want to trace their family roots, set the historic context for a novel or film, research a local history or commemorate an event. Many archives promote awareness and education of their community's heritage through publications, school kits, exhibits and a variety of other activities.

The Archives Association of Ontario (<http://aao.fis.utoronto.ca>) has over 600 members – archivists, users of archives and supporters – and provides advisory services to municipalities through the Archives Advisor Program.

## Libraries

Public libraries are centres of life-long learning and hubs of community life. Libraries play an important role in heritage conservation by providing opportunities and resources for research, learning, displays, public

programming, community meeting space and more.

Library buildings are often heritage resources themselves – whether they are older Carnegie libraries, newer architectural gems, or other kinds of buildings that have been creatively reused, such as the old railway station in Petrolia or the former post office in Cornwall.

Most public libraries have local history collections. Some of Ontario's Municipal Heritage Committees keep their reference materials and records in the local history section of the library. Some historical societies have also donated their collections to the local library. In partnership with local heritage organizations, many public libraries are digitizing their local history collections and making them accessible via their websites.



Many libraries are heritage buildings themselves, such as the Woodstock Public Library.  
(Photo courtesy of Woodstock Public Library. Photographer: Philip Carter, Architect)



The Ontario Heritage Trust's Provincial Plaque Program commemorates subjects of provincial significance, such as the Japanese Canadian Road Camps during World War II. (Photo: Ontario Heritage Trust)

# Promoting your heritage

Education is one of the most effective tools for helping to conserve our heritage besides the legislative tools available under the Ontario Heritage Act. Cultural heritage resources have the ability to engage us, to inspire us, to foster learning, enjoyment and wonder. Telling the stories of cultural heritage resources in your community through heritage interpretation, as it is called, is an engaging way to bring heritage resources to life. It allows people in the community to enjoy the heritage around them and provides life-long learning opportunities. It draws visitors to the community who are seeking out new cultural experiences, and raises public interest in sustaining heritage resources.

There are many ways to promote heritage in communities. Community museums play a major role in interpreting local and provincial history, especially the value of heritage resources in your community. Museums are often at the hub of heritage activities in the community – mounting exhibits, hosting special events and seasonal celebrations, going into the community to do outreach programs. Museums also offer other learning opportunities by partnering with local school boards and other educational institutions to complement their curricula.

Municipal Heritage Committees, archives, libraries, historical societies, archaeological associations and interpretation centres are also actively involved in interpreting cultural heritage – especially those located at historic sites.

Visit Port Hope on the Saturday before Thanksgiving and you will find the town's house tour in full swing. But be forewarned...by September, tickets are sold out. Port Hope is known for its preserved 19<sup>th</sup> century main street and heritage homes. For over 20 years, the community has held its annual house tour to promote this rich heritage. For the past few years, the proceeds have been donated to the restoration of the town's historic Capitol Theatre.

Heritage interpretation takes a wide variety of forms – curriculum-based educational programs at community museums led by knowledgeable staff, local and regional heritage fairs, self-guided walking tours, drama-in-education programs or theatre, art exhibitions depicting local heritage, and special events such as fall fairs, house tours and Heritage Day. Other forms include: historical re-enactments, public archaeological digs, exhibits and displays, websites, oral history projects, pamphlets, guides and maps, local cable television programming on heritage, plaques marking heritage sites and awards for heritage conservation.

When planning your heritage interpretation programs, here are some guidelines you may want to consider:

- ensure your cultural heritage resources are used but not used up or abused – they're irreplaceable.
- focus on authenticity – for example, an Ontario pioneer village may not be a good venue for a U.S. Civil War battle re-enactment.
- involve the community – recruit volunteers and public and private partners.
- make programs accessible to everyone.
- provide hands-on, interactive and indoor/outdoor experiences where possible.

Appeal to a variety of learning styles – for example, some people learn by listening; others by doing.

## **Heritage On-line**

The Ministry of Culture provides an on-line database of all the properties in the province that have been:

- Designated under the Ontario Heritage Act
- Protected through a heritage conservation easement agreement
- Declared a National Historic Site
- Given recognition under the Heritage Railway Stations Protection Act
- Commemorated with a provincial plaque
- Owned by the Ontario Heritage Trust
- Listed on the Ontario Heritage Bridge List

This database, which can be accessed through the ministry website at [www.culture.gov.on.ca](http://www.culture.gov.on.ca) is a valuable resource for learning about and promoting heritage properties across the province. It also sets heritage properties in a provincial context. For example, municipalities, heritage groups and members of the public can see how many of a particular property type (barns, for instance) have been protected in Ontario.

## **Canadian Register of Historic Places**

Developed collaboratively by the federal, provincial and territorial governments, the Canadian Register of Historic Places provides on-line access to listings of formally recognized historic places across the country. The register, located at [www.historicplaces.ca](http://www.historicplaces.ca), serves as a tool for Canadians to identify and promote historic places in Canada, and for travellers to locate places of interest across the country. It provides detailed information about historic places to planners, heritage professionals, policy-makers, developers, industry, community organizations, and teachers and students.

## Ontario Heritage Trust

The Ontario Heritage Trust (formerly called the Ontario Heritage Foundation) is the Province's lead heritage agency. The trust is dedicated to identifying, preserving, protecting and promoting Ontario's rich and varied heritage for the benefit of present and future generations.



Fulford Place in Brockville is owned and operated by the Ontario Heritage Trust.  
(Photo: Ontario Heritage Trust)

The Ontario Heritage Trust undertakes a variety of educational activities such as its commemorative and interpretive plaque programs, Community Heritage Recognition Program, Young Heritage Leaders and Doors Open Ontario.

## Commemorative and Interpretive Plaque Programs

The trust works with communities across the province to promote Ontario's past through its commemorative and interpretive plaque programs: the Provincial Plaque Program and Local Marking Program.

The Provincial Plaque Program is the trust's oldest and, perhaps, best-known activity. Since the 1950s, when the first plaque was unveiled, the trust has erected more than 1,150 provincial plaques. These familiar blue and gold plaques commemorate provincially significant subjects and make Ontario's history come alive by telling stories of the people, places and events that helped shape our province.

The trust has also assisted communities to erect over 600 markers across Ontario for locally important subjects.

The Ontario Heritage Trust's Provincial Plaque Program commemorates significant people, places and events in Ontario's history, including the Port Burwell Lighthouse.  
(Photo: Ontario Heritage Trust)



## Heritage Community Recognition Program

Since 1996, the trust has asked Ontario municipalities, First Nations band councils and Métis community councils to nominate individuals in their communities who have made a significant contribution to the promotion, preservation or protection of Ontario's heritage.



The Ontario Heritage Trust's Heritage Community Recognition Program recognizes individuals who have made significant contributions to heritage preservation in their communities. (Photo: Ontario Heritage Trust)

Those selected receive a certificate of recognition and a pin honouring their service. Individuals have been recognized for leadership of natural heritage conservation and restoration projects, long-standing voluntary service to local heritage organizations, production of local history publications and participation in the preservation of heritage buildings.

## Young Heritage Leaders

The trust honours young people who have contributed to the preservation of local heritage. The Young Heritage Leaders program awards certificates of recognition and pins to young people who have given their time and enthusiasm to heritage projects or activities.

Achievements have included the design of heritage websites, protection of natural heritage areas, production of local history publications, development of walking tours, costumed interpretation at historic sites and volunteering at local museums.

The Ontario Heritage Trust's Young Heritage Leaders program recognizes the outstanding contributions that young people are making to local heritage preservation. (Photo: Ontario Heritage Trust)

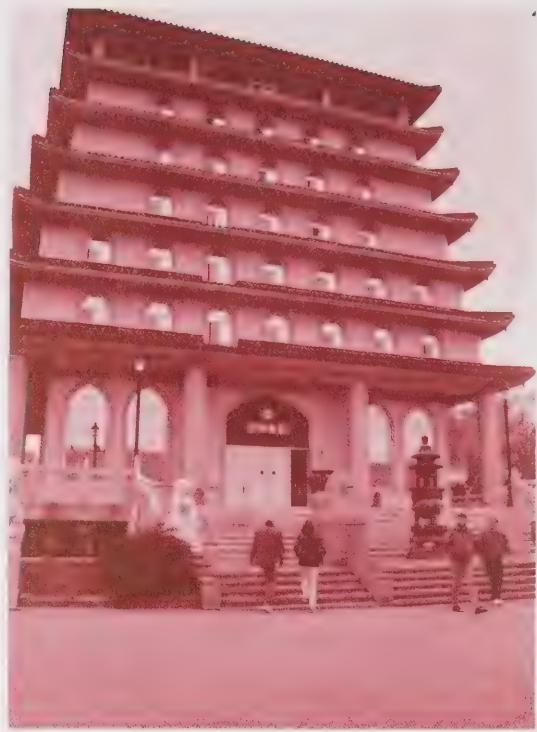


## Doors Open Ontario

Throughout the province, there is a growing pride in our heritage. Communities boast of their commercial buildings, courthouses, places of worship, gardens, natural heritage and other heritage sites.

The Ontario Heritage Trust launched Doors Open Ontario in 2002 to create access, awareness and excitement about our province's heritage. From April through October each year, communities will open the doors of some of our most intriguing and charming heritage sites. Admission is free. Since the program began, hundreds of thousands of people have enjoyed visiting Doors Open Ontario heritage sites.

Further information about the Ontario Heritage Trust and its programs is available from the trust's website at [www.heritagefdn.on.ca](http://www.heritagefdn.on.ca) or by calling (416) 325-5000.



Visitors tour the Cham-Shan Temple in Niagara Falls. (Photo: Doors Open Ontario)

*"Doors Open Ontario invites residents and visitors to explore intriguing buildings, many of which are normally closed to the public," said the Honourable Lincoln M. Alexander, Ontario Heritage Trust Chairman. "In addition to looking behind closed doors, visitors participate in on-site demonstrations and discover Ontario's rich heritage first-hand."*



# Next Steps

This guide has provided information on:

- the benefits of heritage to the community
- different kinds of cultural heritage resources
- partners that may be involved in protecting and promoting heritage
- the wide range of tools that can be used to identify, protect, promote and plan for your community's heritage assets.

A few questions are suggested below to help you put this information into the context of your community.

1. What cultural heritage resources does your community have?
2. Does your municipality have a Municipal Heritage Committee?
3. What links does heritage have to economic activity and development in your community?
4. What opportunities are there for further links?
5. Who in your community is involved in protecting and promoting heritage?
6. And, most importantly... how are you going to get involved?

For more information on heritage conservation in your community, contact the Heritage & Libraries Branch of the Ministry of Culture at:

Heritage & Libraries Branch  
Ministry of Culture  
400 University Avenue, 4th Floor  
Toronto, ON M7A 2R9  
Tel: (416) 314-7136  
[www.culture.gov.on.ca](http://www.culture.gov.on.ca)

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